

# SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

## Kimball School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-07

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** October 12, 2006

**Date of Report:** November 20, 2006

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Needs Assistance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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### **Principle 1 – General Supervision**

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State table A & D
- Comprehensive plan
- Surveys
- Referral list
- District documentation
- State report card

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district's comprehensive plan has policies and procedures in place to ensure student identification, suspension and expulsion. The comprehensive plan meets state and federal requirements. The district consistently documents all referrals. There are no private schools within the Kimball school district.

The steering committee concluded the district uses data-based-making procedures to review and analyze school district-level data to determine if the school district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators. The district's graduation rate for students with disabilities is 100% and all students with disabilities presently participate in the Dakota STEP statewide assessment.

The steering committee concluded the district adheres to the state policies and regulations to ensure the district employs or contracts with an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised and fully licensed or certified to work with students with disabilities. All district staff meet state certification or licensure requirements for the provision of special education. The district ensures personnel who work with students with disabilities have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet student needs. The district utilizes Mid-Central Coop to help determine district training needs and provide the training for those identified needs. Kimball special education staff is informed of professional development opportunities throughout the year.

### **Needs improvement**

The steering committee concluded the district is not meeting the professional development needs of all staff. General education staff indicated they do not have input into the identification of staff development needs and planning of activities related to students with disabilities.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

Through file review and staff interview the monitoring team determined the district meets requirements under general supervision. The district has policies and procedures in place for addressing and documenting referrals. District special education staff is fully certified. The monitoring team could not validate the district's concern in the area of professional development. The district has provided professional development in such as areas as curriculum mapping, character counts, national certification, and data retreats for all staff members. The district also did a professional development needs assessment at the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in

principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Surveys
- State data table
- File reviews

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The Kimball School District has had no students on Individualized Education Program plans that have been suspended or expelled. The district comprehensive plan has procedures in place should the need for expulsion or suspension of a student with a disability occur.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

Through file review, review of state data tables and interview with administration the monitoring team validates the steering committee's findings under free appropriate public education. The district has in place procedures to address the district's responsibility for meeting the educational needs of a student with a disability who had been suspended or expelled. The district ensures free public education for those students reaching the age of three years old if the child meets the eligibility criteria for Part B.

### **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Surveys
- State data table
- File reviews

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district follows the state guidelines and state approved comprehensive plan to fulfill requirements during the evaluation process. Written notices and consent for assessment is obtained before an assessment is administered to a child for an initial evaluation or re-evaluation. The district uses a variety of evaluation procedures and assessment instruments to meet minimum requirements during the evaluation process. The school district ensures reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

### **Needs improvement**

The steering committee concluded the district needs to consistently obtain consent for evaluation prior to administering any evaluation. In one of the ten files reviewed, one test was given that was not listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

Through file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings under appropriate evaluation as meeting requirement. The district conducted comprehensive evaluations prior to determining eligibility. Evaluations and reevaluations were conducted in a timely manner. The district child count reflects only those students who met South Dakota eligibility criteria.

Through file review the monitoring team could not validate the steering committee findings under appropriate evaluation identified as needing improvement. In seven of seven files reviews parental consent was obtained prior to the administering of any evaluation.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- File reviews
- Surveys
- Parental rights document
- Comprehensive plan
- Consent/ Prior notice forms

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district ensures procedural safeguards are consistently followed. Parents are fully informed of their rights and of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. Parental consent is obtained prior to evaluation and initial placement. The district ensures the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified as the district has identified an individual to act as a surrogate in the event one is needed. District policies and procedure are in place to provide parents of children with special needs the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records. The district comprehensive plan has policies and procedure in place to address complaint issues, including due process. There have been no requests for due process or formal complaints filed within the past six years.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

Through file review the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirements in the areas identified under procedural safeguards. Parents are consistently informed of their parental rights, provisions are in place to ensure the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be located, and parental consent is obtained prior to evaluation/reevaluation.

### **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- File reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the Kimball School District consistently implements the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process in the areas of required membership, transition, approved IEP forms, and meeting required timelines. The steering committee concluded at least one general classroom teacher attends all IEP meetings and they have copies of the IEP or modifications they are required to implement.

All parents surveyed indicated they receive copies of the IEP and are knowledgeable of services being provided after the IEP is developed. Student surveys indicated they are invited to their IEP meeting. The steering committee concluded goals link to present level of performance and goals are measurable.

### **Needs improvement**

The steering committee concluded the district consistently addresses all areas on the present level of performance but that there were some areas that were weak in several of the Individualized Education Programs reviewed.

### **Out of compliance**

The steering committee concluded the district does not consistently document modifications. The modifications for state wide testing did not match those listed on the modification page. The location of services was not sufficiently specific (school vs. specific room).

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

Through file review and staff interview the monitoring team validates some of the steering committee findings as meeting requirements under Individualized Education Program (IEP). General education teachers consistently attend Individualized Education Program meetings and have a copy of the IEP or a list of modifications they are required to implement. The district ensures each student's IEP is reviewed and revised on an annual basis and that only state approved forms are being used. Transition age students consistently attend their IEP meetings. Through file review the monitoring team could not validate the steering committee findings identified as out of compliance under Individualized Education Program. The monitoring team determined the district does address and document modifications for state wide testing.

### **Out of compliance: Needs Assistance**

**ARSD 24:05:27:01.01. IEP team.** Each school district shall ensure that the IEP team for each student with disabilities includes the following members: The parents of the student; at least one regular education teacher of the student if the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment and at least one special education teacher of the student.

**ARSD 24:05:16:16. Personnel standards.** To ensure that all personnel necessary to carry out the purposes of Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, the division shall determine that all personnel providing special education or related services, including early intervention and early childhood personnel, perform these functions under state-approved or state-recognized certification or licensure or other comparable requirements that apply to the area in which the person is providing instruction or other service.

As seen in file five (5) and confirmed through staff interview the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently have appropriate team membership at each Individualized Education Program meeting. Although the district has a certified preschool special education teacher on staff the IEP was developed by the district's special education teacher. The certified preschool special education teacher was not present at that Individualized Education Plan meeting.

**ARSD 24:05:27:01.03. Content of individualized education program** Each student's individualized education program shall include: (1) A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance and (2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to: (a) Meeting the student's needs that result from the student's disability to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and (b) Meeting each of the student's other educational needs that result from the student's disability

**ARSD 24:05:25:04. Evaluation procedures.** School districts shall ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following: (1) A variety of assessment tools and strategies are used to gather relevant functional and development information about the child, including information provided by the parents, that may assist in determining: (a) Whether the child is a child with a disability; and (b) The content of the child's IEP, including information related to enabling the child.

Through file reviews, the present level of performance did not consistently contain all required content. In file six there were no strengths and needs listed in the present level of performance for the related service of speech even though the IEP contained goals for this area. In file five strengths and needs were listed but did not link to functional assessments as none had been done. In file four the strengths and needs identified in the areas of the reading and written language in the present level of performance were global not skill specific.

**CFR 300.320 (a)(7) Comment. Initiation, Frequency, Location and Duration of Services**

What is required is that the IEP include information about the amount of services that will be provided to the child, so that the level of the agency's commitment of resources will be clear to parents and other IEP Team members. The amount of time to be committed to each the various services to be provided must be appropriate to the specific service and clearly state in the IEP in a manner that can be understood by all involved into the development and implementation the IEP.

Through file review the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently provide a clear description of services to be provided for the student as seen in files one, four, five, six and seven. In one of the seven files reviewed there was no description of services. In four other files the services listed were not specific. In statements such as "student will receive 400 minutes of assistance per week in the special education room" or "Special education 5x week/30 minutes each" does not describe the specific services that will be addressed in the resource room.

**Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are

placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State tables F
- Surveys

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee concluded the district consistently ensures students receive services in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for successful participation. Over the past 3 years 88.75% of students on an IEP receive services in the classroom with modifications, with only 8.75% of students on IEPs receiving services in the resource room.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

Through file review, review of data and staff interview the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings under least restrictive environment. The district's percent of students receiving services in the regular classroom with modifications exceeds the state average.